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must be the critics of their own and of their classmates' productions in oral and written composition in order to grow in the mastery of correct, fluent speech are both psychologically sound. The materials of the three books are so well organized in keeping with these two ideas that teachers who accept these principles as the guide to their practice will find the books most valuable aids in the teaching of English. The efficiency of the teaching will be greatly improved by giving careful attention to the notes to the teacher which accompany each book in the series. These notes are a very practical guide in selecting and adapting the teacher's technique in the presenting of each phase of the work. This series of books supplies a long-felt need and should find a very wide field of usefulness in the public schools.

H. W. NUTT

Minimal essentials in language.—Concentration of effort upon a few indispensable language principles necessary for good practice and the elimination of "a few, definite, widely prevalent errors," pressing both of these endeavors persistently by motivated drill—these are two of the keynotes of modern thought in teaching the mother-tongue. A program with suitable materials for carrying out this practice is furnished by Messrs. Miller and Paul in their series of English texts¹ for the grades.

Other features of modern reform movement in teaching the vernacular are equally well provided for in the series: enlisting the co-operation of other classes in supervising language habits; choosing topics from the children's own interests; discriminating use of the project method; self-criticism on the part of the pupils; the socialization of all expressional relations; the stressing of letter-writing as the form of composition in most general use—these and other modern notes are embodied in a very usable form in the books of this series.

R. L. LYMAN

A citizenship course in United States history.—In 1913 a committee of the American School Citizenship League began working on a course of study in history for the elementary grades. The findings of this committee have recently appeared.² They are set forth in five small volumes, one dealing with the general course, another with the course for Grades IV and V, another with the course for Grade VI, and one each for the courses in Grades VII and VIII.

There is nothing strikingly new in the general recommendations. The work in the first three grades deals with primitive life and the beginning of things, and that of Grades IV and V with the biography of representative men. European background of American history is recommended for Grade VI and

¹ WILLIAM D. MILLER and HARRY G. PAUL, *Practical English. Book I*, pp. 317. *Book II*, pp. 315. Chicago: Lyons and Carnahan, 1921.

² *An American Citizenship Course in United States History. Book I*, pp. x+247; *Book II*, pp. x+170; *Book III*, pp. x+178; *Book IV*, pp. x+251; *General Course*, pp. vi+167. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.

United States history for Grades VII and VIII. Those familiar with the Report of the Committee of Eight, which appeared in 1909, will immediately recognize the striking similarity of the two reports.

Books I, II, III, and IV of the report contain, besides the discussion of the course for a grade or grades, type studies which are the products of tried and tested practice. These type studies are intended to give an actual plan of procedure for the use of both teacher and pupil. They are, indeed, the most worth-while phases of the report and should be of considerable value to teachers in the elementary grades.

As a whole, the report must be characterized as very conservative. The committee responsible for it seems willing to reaffirm a report which is now entering its teens. This means that little consideration has been given by the committee to the notable changes of the past decade. The junior high school is not recognized in the report, and the demand for a radical reorganization of the work in United States history for the upper grades is also ignored. Speaking generally, the report is backward- rather than forward-looking.

R. M. TRYON

The content and adaptability of general-science texts.—The claims for any subject of instruction must, to a considerable degree, be based on the content of the instruction in that subject. The content of instruction in the various subjects of the elementary- and secondary-school curricula is generally determined by the content of the textbooks or reference books. It seems logical, therefore, that an analysis of the available textbooks would prove of worth both in determining the claims for the subject and the changes to be made in order to improve instruction in the subject.

The purpose of a recent study¹ in the field of general sciences has been to present a quantitative analysis of the subject-matter in the various general-science texts and to give the reactions of children of the last three grammar grades to science.

From the data secured in the analysis of the subject-matter of general science it was found that the space devoted to instruction in the eighteen texts examined comprised topics which might be considered as belonging to eight large science groups, which ranked in importance as to space as follows: physics, physiography, biology, physiology, chemistry, household arts, astronomy, and miscellaneous. The author finds that, with the exception of household arts and zoölogy, there is a fairly well-established agreement among the authors of general science as to what subject-matter is appropriate. Tables are displayed which show that general science is presented in the form of small unit topics, two or three pages in extent. Factual evidence supports the conclusion that the authors of general-science texts have found it least difficult

¹ HANOR A. WEBB, *General Science Instruction in the Grades*. Nashville, Tennessee: George Peabody College for Teachers, 1921. Pp. 105.